

2024



# Social Impact Report 2024



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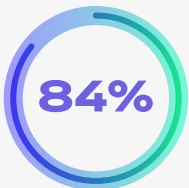
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# NCFE's impact in numbers

## Learners



of providers state that learners are well-prepared for further learning



of providers feel NCFE learners will have good employment opportunities

**453,000**

learners registered with NCFE in 2023/24

**Over 11,000**

NCFE learners applied for Higher Education helping drive future success in academic and professional pursuits



**89% of our CACHE Alumni members** who had studied an NCFE course in Child Development, had moved on into employment within Early Years or Education

## Institutions and educators

**Over 60%**

of our providers are located in the most deprived areas of the UK, meaning NCFE's reach directly impacts those most in need



of institutions report strong relationships with NCFE



Our partnership with WorldSkills UK is enhancing education delivery. **40 providers** are taking part in WorldSkillsUK Centre of Excellence with a potential to reach **51,000 learners**.

## Sector leadership

**£1 million**

invested in assessment innovation reshaping educational assessment



More than 75% of our staff feel proud to work for NCFE

**3,289 learners**

and

**206 educators**

across

**49 institutions**

took part in the Assessment Innovation Fund this year driving sector wide change



NCFE operates in **21 countries**, contributing to raising global education standards

## Society and economic



NCFE's Assessment Innovation Fund generates **£1.70 in Social Value for every £1 invested**



of our providers believe NCFE learners positively impact society



Over 76% of providers report that NCFE learners contribute to the economy

Our head office is based in the **North East** which is the most deprived region in England. We are a **Real Living Wage employer**, employing over **750 employees** who go on to contribute to the local economy.

## Executive summary and key takeaways

As we reflect on our performance and impact over the past year, it's clear that NCFE continues to play a pivotal role in the further education sector. While we are proud of the progress we have made, we also recognise the areas where we can sharpen our focus to drive even greater improvements. Below, we outline both our strengths and the opportunities we see for growth - ensuring that our influence is used not only to benefit learners but to advocate for meaningful, long-term change across the entire education landscape.

### Where we are strong

**Learner-centered focus:** NCFE is widely seen as being **deeply invested in learner outcomes**, with clear links between our strategic actions and the positive influence they have on the beneficiaries of our products and services. This **learner-centered approach** drives everything we do, ensuring that educational pathways remain relevant and beneficial to individuals and society.

**Creating opportunities for progression:** learners and providers recognise **qualifications as the currency** that learners attain to enable their future progression and that completing NCFE courses opens doors to employment and further learning opportunities. This demonstrates NCFE's commitment to not just awarding qualifications, but to **empowering learners for long-term success** and contributing to workforce readiness across key industries.

**Championing policy change:** over the past year, NCFE has used its voice to **influence crucial policy decisions**, such as working with the Department for Education to remove barriers that previously hindered workforce recruitment in the early years sector. Our successful advocacy in lifting the Level 2 maths requirement in staffing ratios is a clear example of how we can help shape policies that **remove obstacles and create opportunities** for learners and educators alike.



## Executive summary and key takeaways

**Innovating for the sector:** with a **£1million investment in the Assessment Innovation Fund**, NCFE is leading the charge in developing new assessment methods that better reflect the diverse skills of learners. Stakeholders value our **willingness to challenge the status quo**, and our commitment to innovation helps ensure that the sector remains responsive to the needs of learners, educators and employers, improving outcomes for everyone involved.

**Collaborating with key stakeholders:** we've built strong relationships across the education landscape, with **93% of providers reporting that NCFE is a trusted partner**. This collaboration is crucial to ensuring that our efforts are aligned with the needs of the sector and that we can continue to push for the highest standards in education delivery.



## Executive summary and key takeaways

### Where we can improve

**Collaborating to improve resource quality:** while our relationships with institutions are strong, there is an opportunity to work even more closely with educators to **improve the quality of learning resources**, reduce complexity and administrative burden, and to gather enhanced longitudinal data on impact. By co-developing resources with those on the frontlines, we can ensure they are practical, relevant, and better tailored to the needs of both learners and educators—further enhancing the educational experience.

**Increasing our presence in key debates:** while we've made progress, only 60% of providers currently view NCFE as a key voice in the FE sector. This highlights the **need for NCFE to be more visible and proactive in influencing policy** and sector-wide discussions. Our goal is not simply to be heard, but to ensure that our voice amplifies the needs of learners, providers and employers, and contributes to the broader movement for inclusive, fair and high-quality education for all.

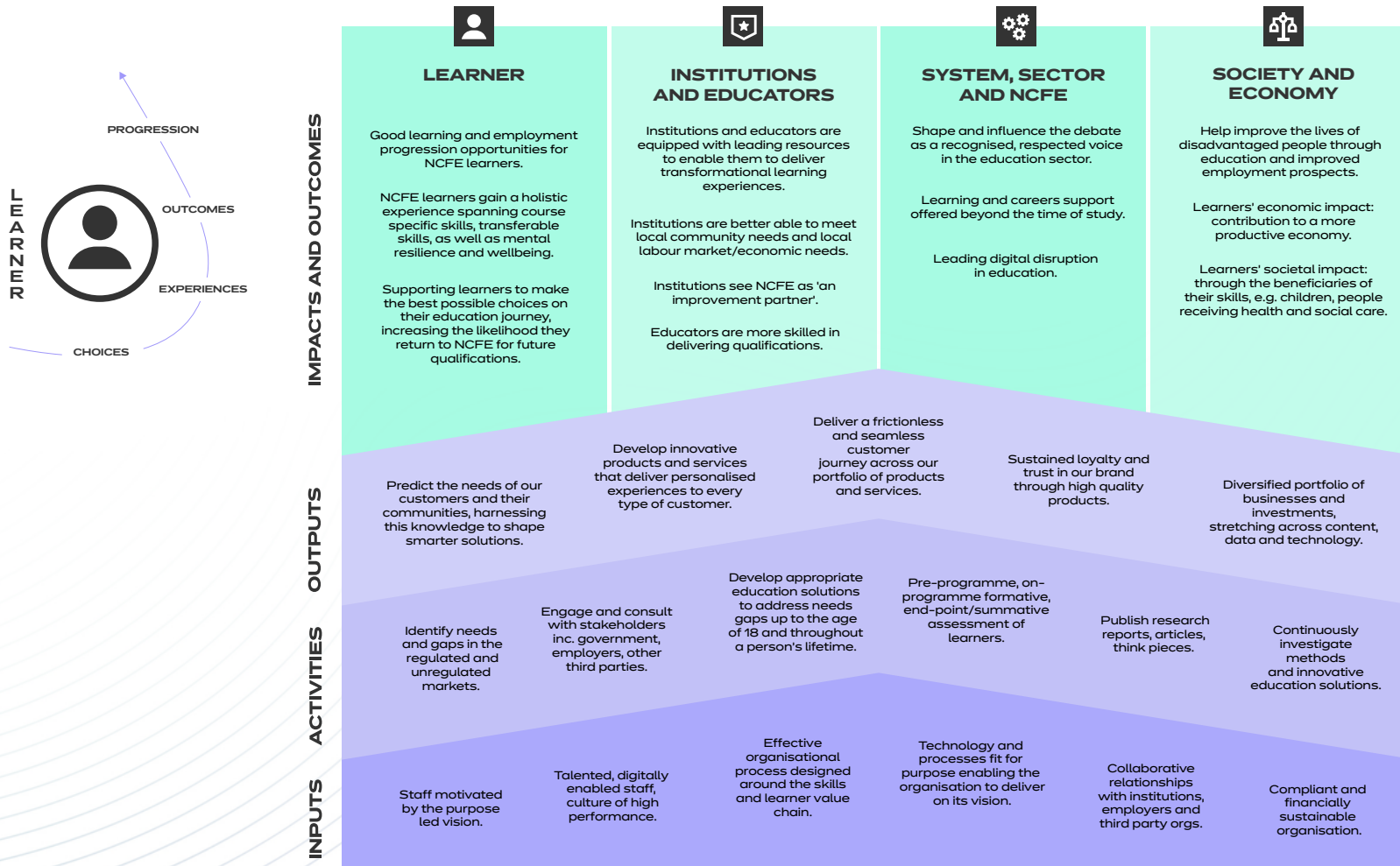
**Deepening our sector-wide impact:** to be truly impactful, **our focus must be on collaboration** with other key players in the sector. This includes working more closely with policymakers, institutions, and other awarding organisations to drive the changes needed for a more equitable and effective education system.

**Championing our investments in innovation:** NCFE has made significant investments in innovation, but we can do more to ensure these are communicated effectively. We need to **highlight our cutting-edge projects**, not just within the provider network, but across the wider education sector and beyond. By doing so, we can better demonstrate the real-world impact of our innovations and how they contribute to the advancement of educational policy and practices.



# NCFE's Theory of Change model

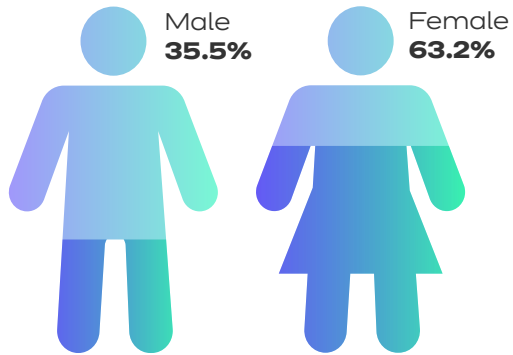
NCFE's Theory of Change (ToC) model traces a clear path from our purpose to its inputs, linking inputs, activities, and outputs in a coherent chain. Mapping these out helps us to define the mechanisms that need to be in place for impact to occur.



# Learners: reach and impact | awarding

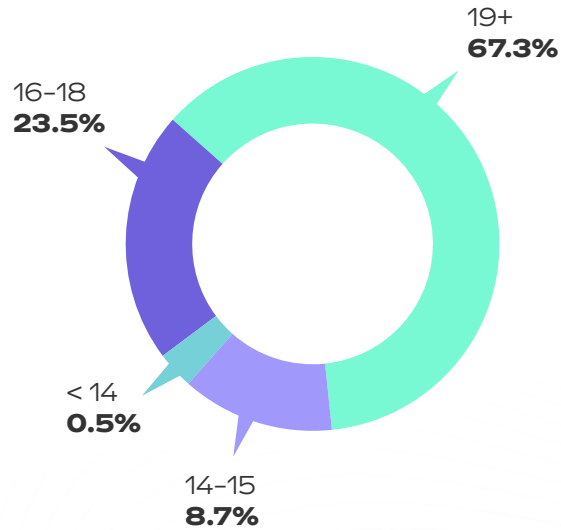
Analysis of our learner data shows that over 60% of NCFE enrolments in 2023–24 were taught at providers in areas that fell in the 5 most deprived deciles in England.

## Gender

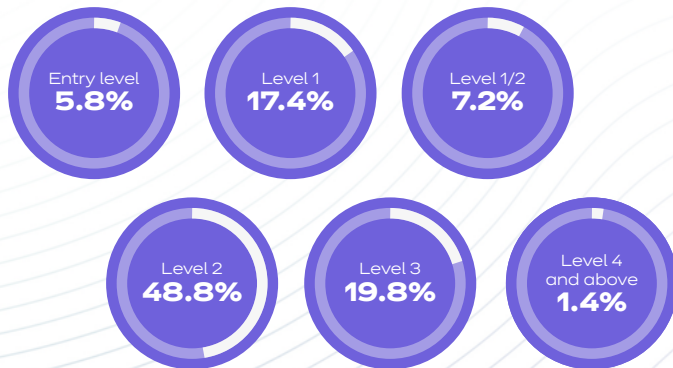


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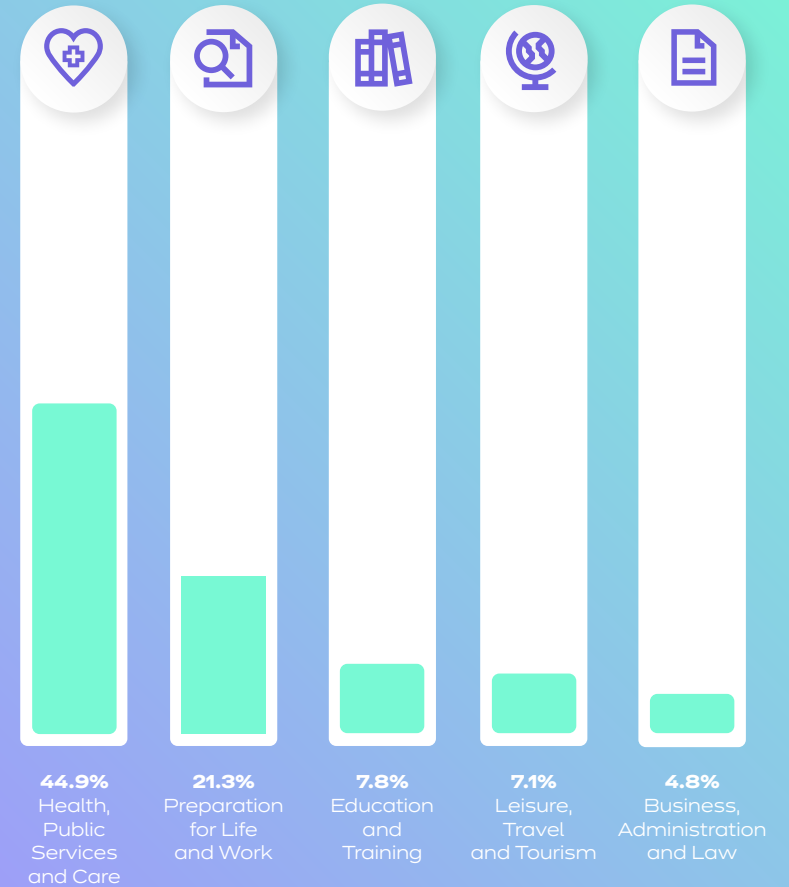
## Age



## Level



## Sector (Top 5)

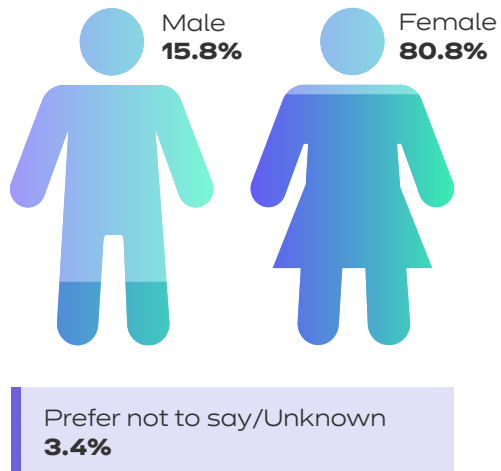


Total number of awarding learners: 453,520 registrations  
Source: NCFE learner registration data, 2023-24

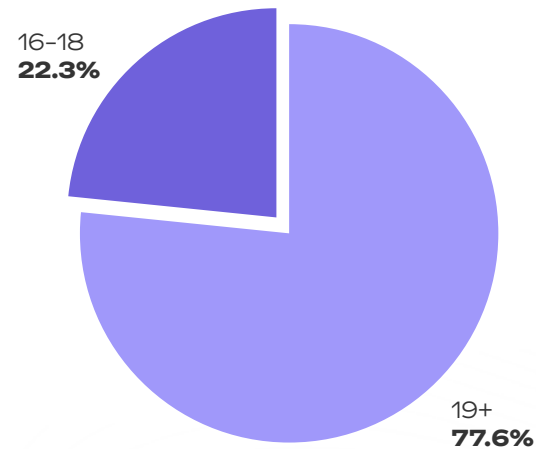


# Learners: reach and impact | end-point assessment

## Gender



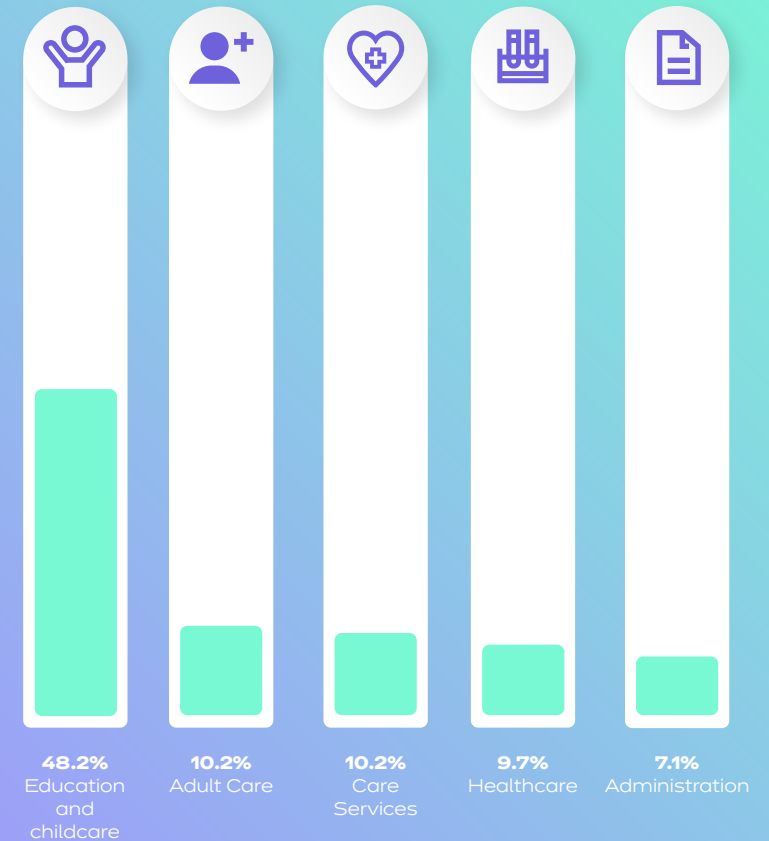
## Age



## Level



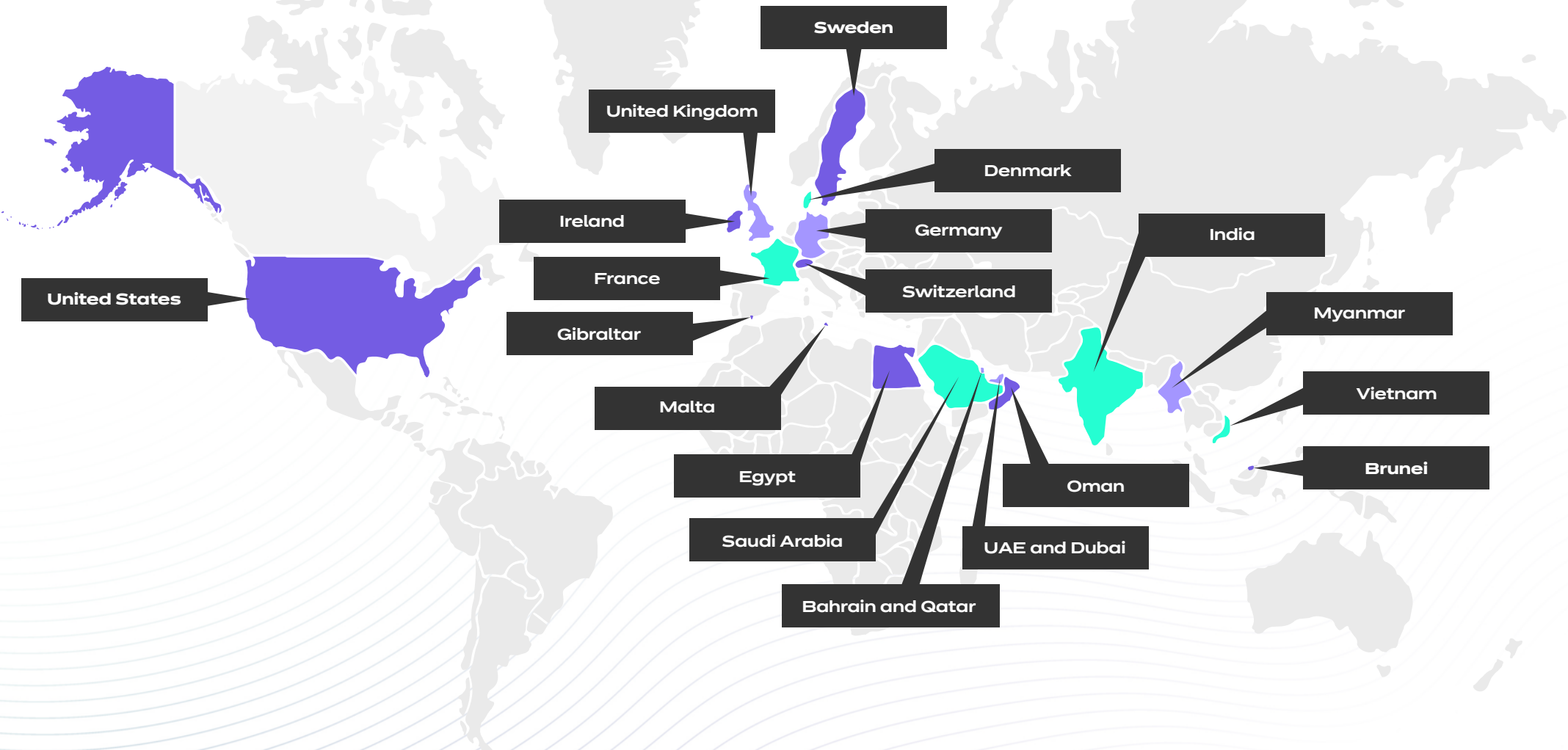
## Sector (Top 5)



Total number of EPA learners: 11,900 registrations  
Source: NCFE learner registration data, 2023-24

# Global reach

Not only does NCFE reach learners based in the UK, we're also growing our presence globally. We're bringing our strong reputation across the world, with a particular presence in Asia and the Middle East specifically through our early years education courses and our acquisition of Active IQ.





## Learners: reach and impact

Learners are at the heart of all we do at NCFE. We feel that by offering a wide range of vocational qualifications and giving the learner a breadth of choices to carve out the path that is best for them, we will ensure no learner is left behind. In 2023-24, almost 12,000 apprentices completed their EPA, and more than 453,500 learners registered with NCFE.

We continue to reach a wide range of backgrounds and work with providers supporting disadvantaged learners to reach their career and progression goals. Some of these can be seen in our Aspiration Award winners, whose inspirational stories can encourage those who feel the odds are stacked against them.

**"I thought I was going to do rubbish because I've never done anything like this for 30 years since I left school, and I went back, and I passed. I passed everything up to now, so I was absolutely over the moon."**

**- NCFE adult learner**

### Discover more inspiring stories here

Our qualifications impact learners' lives by boosting confidence, fostering a sense of achievement, and enhancing mental health.



## Institutions and educators: building and diversifying

At NCFE, we hold the notion of collaboration in high esteem; we want to work with our providers to equip them with products and skills to enable them to deliver transformational learning experiences. We aim to support educators to become more skilled at delivering qualifications and intend for institutions to better able to meet local community needs and local labour market/economic needs. We also wish for institutions to see NCFE as an 'improvement partner'.

**93% of institutions and education providers we work with agreed they have a very good working relationship with NCFE.**

**[Click here to discover more](#)**

Learn about our relationships with institutions and educators, and explore our partnerships and investments here in the UK and around the world.



## Systems leadership, sector and NCFE: an influential voice for skills

As we enter a new era following the election of a Labour government, our stakeholders remind us of the importance of presenting a strong and influential voice to support the further education (FE) sector within the debate. We'll use our new strategy to 2030 to guide us to build our voice, leveraging our position as one of the largest vocational and technical awarding organisations to lead conversations with government audiences and build partnerships for the benefit of our beneficiaries and customers.

**A total of £1,585,525 in social value has been generated by our Assessment Innovation Fund.**

**[Click here to read in full](#)**

Uncover our passion for, and commitment to, sector disruption and change – including the impact of our Assessment Innovation Fund (AIF) which has committed £1m of social investment.



## Society and economy: reaching further to make an impact

One of NCFE's primary aims is to ensure no learner is left behind – this can be extended to the beneficiaries of the skills our learners develop. Whether learners complete one of our early years and education programmes, or a course in business administration, the benefits of the learning do not end with the individual. The skills developed go on to benefit a range of beneficiaries, from children, to colleagues, to the elderly.

**"Thank you so much for giving people like me from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to succeed. This bursary helped me to overcome any financial obstacles that could stand in my way and set me apart from more privileged peers"**

**- Helena Kennedy Foundation bursary recipient**

### Explore more powerful stories

Learn more about our Social Impact Fund recipients and educational bursary beneficiaries.



## Conclusion

Our 2024 Impact Report has demonstrated that as an organisation, NCFE is making an impact in the areas we've identified as important; however, there's still work to be done to ensure that this continues and is measurable.

- Our learners report they have increased confidence to move into further study or employment following completion of an NCFE qualification, but we'd like to explore ways of measuring this impact in more meaningful ways.
- Our providers report they have a good relationship with NCFE, however there is some way to go to improve the resources we deliver to educators and learners.
- Our stakeholders report we have the potential to be a strong voice in the sector, but work must continue to ensure we are heard.
- Our wider reaching impact includes touching the lives of those who are disadvantaged, through initiatives such as the Social Impact Fund, however more work can be done to measure the impact of those beneficiaries.

We'll endeavour to take these commitments forward into 2025, and beyond.